

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 12225

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PFOR, OREP, TH, VS

SUBJ: VISIT OF STAFFDEL BRADY AND PITCHFORD

REF: STATE 115523

SUMMARY: JOHN J. BRADY AND GERALD E. PITCHFORD, MEMBERS OF THE STAFF OF THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE, VISITED THAILAND JUNE 13-18. DURING THEIR STAY THEY MET WITH EMBASSY AND MACTHAI OFFICIALS AND WITH THAI OFFICIALS AT SUPREME COMMAND AND THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. PRINCIPAL SUBJECTS DISCUSSED WERE: IMPACT OF A PHASE-OUT OF GRANT MILITARY ASSISTANCE, DISPOSITION OF EXCESS PROPERTY TO BE GENERATED BY U.S. TROOP WITHDRAWALS, AND FUTURE OF THAI-U.S. RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. MAP PHASE-OUT: STAFFDEL SHOWED PARTICULAR INTEREST IN INTERLOCUTORS' ASSESSMENTS OF IMPACT OF GRANT MAP CUT-OFF OR PHASE-OUT. GIST OF WHAT THEY WERE TOLD WAS THAT THAI EXPECTED GRADUAL REDUCTIONS IN MAP TO CONTINUE AND WOULD TRY TO PICK UP SLACK THROUGH INCREASED FMS CASH AND CREDIT SALES AND INCREASED RELIANCE ON MOD BUDGET. GENERAL KRIANGSAK CHAMANAN, CHIEF OF STAFF, SUPREME COMMAND, SAID THAI WOULD NEED HELP TO DEVELOP ARMED FORCES IF THAILAND WAS TO REMAIN STRONG, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF RECENT
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COMMUNIST VICTORIES IN INDOCHINA. HE MADE STRONG

PLEA FOR MAXIMUM ADVANCE WARNING ON MAP PHASE-OUT TO ALLOW PLANNING TIME FOR THAI TO OBTAIN NEEDED MATERIALS THROUGH OWN RESOURCES. MFA OFFICIALS SAID THEY UNDERSTOOD PRESSURES TO REDUCE MAP, BUT EXPRESSED HOPE MAP PHASE-OUT WOULD NOT COINCIDE WITH WITHDRAWALS OF U.S. FORCES AS THIS COULD BE MISINTERPRETED IN SOME QUARTERS AS RETALIATORY ACTION FOR LOSS BASES IN THAILAND.

2. EXCESSES AND

ETROGRADE MATERIAL CONNECTED WITH U.S.

WITHDRAWALS:

STAFFDEL WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN PROPOSAL THAT U.S.-OWNED WAR RESERVE MUNITIONS BE LEFT IN PLACE FOR USE IN CASE OF EMERGENCY. THEY WERE TOLD PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY GRANTED TO DO THIS AND THAT BY OUR BEING FORTHCOMING ON THIS ISSUE, THAI APT TO BE MORE COOPERATIVE IN GRANTING CUSTOMS CLEARANCES FOR LARGE QUANTITIES OF MATERIAL WE MUST RETROGRADE IN CONNECTION WITH U.S. WITHDRAWALS. STAFFDEL ALSO WAS INTERESTED IN PROPOSED TURNOVER OF INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM (ICS). THEY WERE TOLD THAI ARE INTERESTED IN PORTIONS OF SYSTEM BUT THAT WE DID NOT YET HAVE AUTHORIZATION TO DISCUSS DETAILS OF TURNOVER WITH THEM.

3. THAI-U.S. RELATIONS: KRIANGSAK AT SUPREME

COMMAND AND MFA OFFICIALS SAID THEY HOPED THAT DESPITE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. TROOPS THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WOULD CONTINUE. AMERICAN DIVISION CHIEF AT MFA SPECIFICALLY POINTED OUT THAT MARCH 1976 DEADLINE ON TROOP WITHDRAWALS WAS FOR TACTICAL AIRCRAFT AND TROOPS CONNECTED WITH INDOCHINA WAR. HE SAID MFA WAS IN PROCESS OF REVIEWING AGREEMENTS AUTHORIZING OTHER U.S. MILITARY UNITS TO BE IN THAILAND, AND INDICATED THAT IN AREAS WHERE SUFFICIENT "MUTUALITY OF INTEREST" EXISTED SOME CONTINUED PRESENCE MIGHT BE POSSIBLE.

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